

# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



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### EHS Circular Letter 2013-46

TO: Local Directors of Health  
Certified Food Inspectors

FROM: Tracey Weeks, MS, RS  
Coordinator, Food Protection Program

DATE: August 3, 2013

SUBJECT: **Norwalk/Westport Area Shellfish Bed Closures Due to *Vibrio* Foodborne Illnesses;  
Recall of Clams and Oysters**

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The Department of Agriculture Bureau of Aquaculture (DA/BA) has announced the voluntary closure of shellfish beds in the Norwalk Westport area due to a number of illnesses caused by *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*, a naturally occurring bacterium associated with shellfish harvested from the noted specific areas. The closure affects commercial areas in Norwalk and Westport and recreational areas in Norwalk, Westport, and Darien. Oysters and clams harvested from these areas between 7/3/13 and 8/2/13 are being recalled. See attached information from the DA/BA that provides currently available details on the specific beds and lot numbers of shellfish that are affected. DA/BA is continuing to collect product information from harvesters and shippers and will provide this information to the FPP when it is received.

The affected shellfish industry is actively notifying their customers however, due to the complex nature of distribution the Food Protection Program (FPP) advises local health departments to contact restaurants and other food establishments likely to have the recalled product to maximize removal of the recalled product and reduce the risk for additional illnesses. Consumers who harvested from the Westport, Darien, or Norwalk recreational beds are advised to not consume the shellfish and to discard any remaining product to avoid cross contamination of other foods or food contact surfaces.

Questions regarding the affected product should be directed to DA/BA at the numbers provided on the attached announcement.

The symptoms of foodborne *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* infection include watery diarrhea, often with abdominal cramping, nausea, vomiting, and fever. Symptoms typically occur within 24 hours after consumption of contaminated shellfish and can last about up to 7 days. Immune compromised people and those with certain medical conditions including liver disease are at greatest for foodborne disease.

Consumers reporting illness should be interviewed using the standard Alert Form and advised to seek medical care and inform the physician of the possibility of vibrio infection so that the proper stool test is performed. Alert forms should be faxed to the FPP within 24 hours at 860-509-8071.

C: Suzanne Blancaflor, M.S., M.P.H., Chief, Environmental Health Section  
Ellen Blaschinski, R.S., M.B.A., Chief, Regulatory Services Branch



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